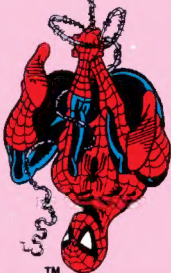


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AUTHORITY



HE'S HERE! **X-MEN** BEAST!

SPIDER-MAN

WHAT IS... THE
**MUTANT
FACTOR?!**

ERIK
LAPORTE

STAN LEE PRESENTS:

THE MUTANT FACTOR!

NICE NIGHT FOR WEB SLINGING. WISH I COULD ENJOY IT MORE.

BUT RIGHT NOW, I'M A MAN ON A MISSION. AND THAT MISSION...

...IS TO FIND THE BEAST!

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EARLIER...

I'VE BEEN
THINKING
ABOUT IT.

DON'T THINK
THAT I
HAVEN'T BEEN
THINKING ABOUT
IT.

IT'S JUST...
WELL, I DON'T
KNOW THAT
ANYBODY CAN
EVER BE
TRULY READY
FOR THIS.

IT'S A BIG
STEP, I KNOW,
MARY JANE.

HAVING KIDS IS A
HUGE RESPONSIBILITY-- ONE THAT
SHOULDN'T BE
ENTERED INTO LIGHTLY.
PLUS, YOU HAVE A
CAREER AND I RUN
AROUND THE ROOF
TOPS IN MY UNDER-
WEAR.

STILL...

PETER...

I'VE BEEN THINKING
ABOUT THIS... A LOT.
IT'S HARD NOT TO
WITH HARRY AND LIZ
AND THEIR LITTLE
ONE LIVING
DOWNSTAIRS AND
YOUR AUNT MAY'S
GENTLE YET PER-
SISTENT HINTS TO GO
FORTH AND MULTIPLY.

IT'S A MAJOR
COMMITMENT.

AND THERE'S
NO TURNING
BACK.

STILL...

YEAH, WELL,
I KNOW
ALL THAT.

SHEESH! ONE WEEK
YOU'RE WORRIED
ABOUT THE TICKING
CLOCK, THE NEXT...

YEAH. YEAH.
I KNOW. I
WAS THERE,
REMEMBER?

IT'S TRUE
I'VE BEEN
DOING MORE
THAN MY FAIR
SHARE OF
FLOPPING
FROM GUNS
HO TO GUN
SHY... BUT
WHAT DO YOU
EXPECT?

THINGS WITH
YOU CAN GET
A LITTLE WEIRD.

YEAH.

I GUESS I DO HAVE
A TENDENCY TO
OVERLOOK THAT. I'M
AS HEALTHY AS CAN
BE, BUT I FORGET
THAT MY GENES
MIGHT BE EFFECTED.

REED AND SUE RICHARDS
HAD SOME HAIRY
COMPLICATIONS WITH THEIR
SON FRANKLIN'S BIRTH,
AND THEIR SECOND CHILD
DIED DURING DELIVERY.

WE'RE HIGH ON THE
LIST OF PEOPLE
LIKELY TO GIVE
BIRTH TO A MUTANT...
AND THAT'S A
SCARY THOUGHT.

BUT SO'S THE
THOUGHT OF
NEVER HAVING
KIDS.

THESE CHOICES
AREN'T GOING
TO GET ANY
EASIER.

I KNOW.

LOOK, I'M
SORRY.

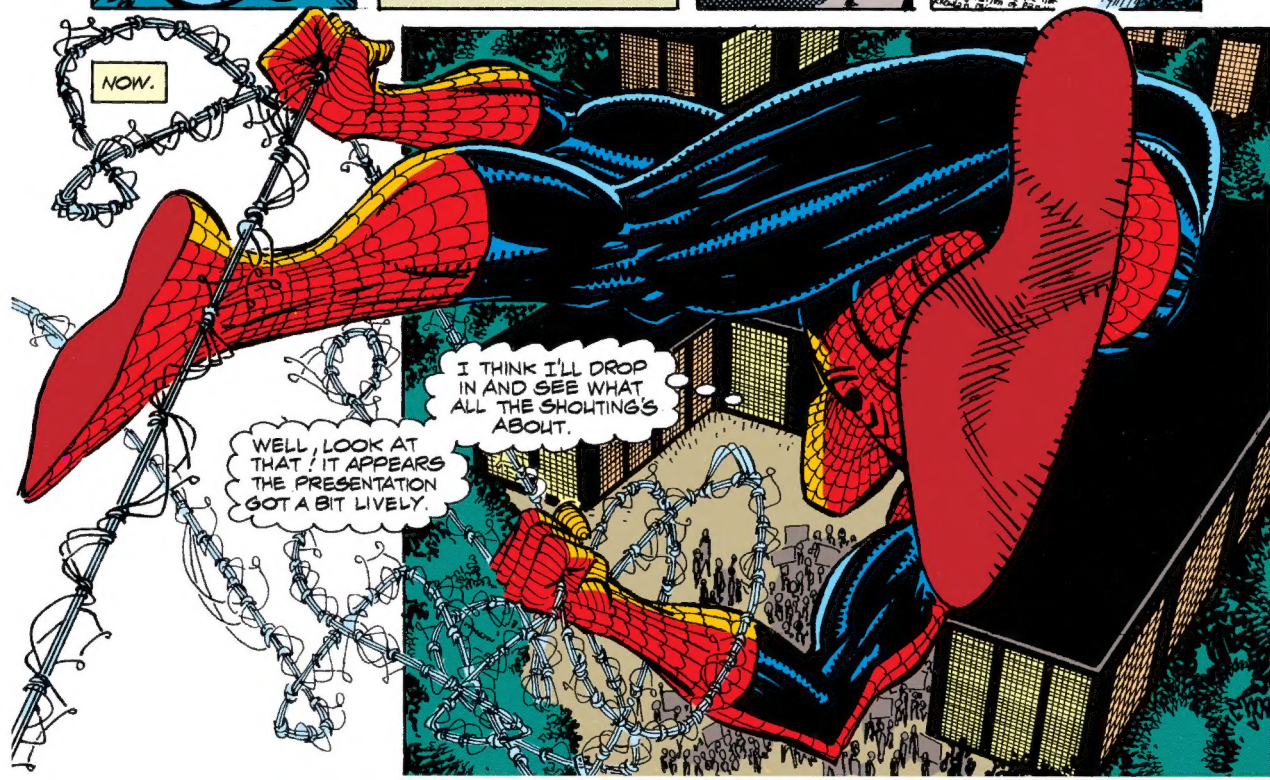
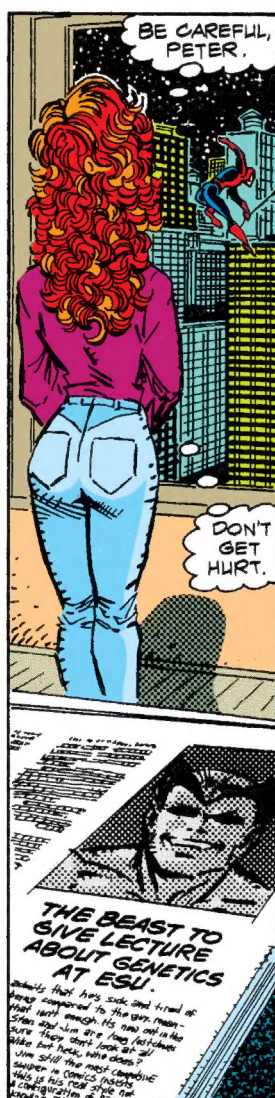
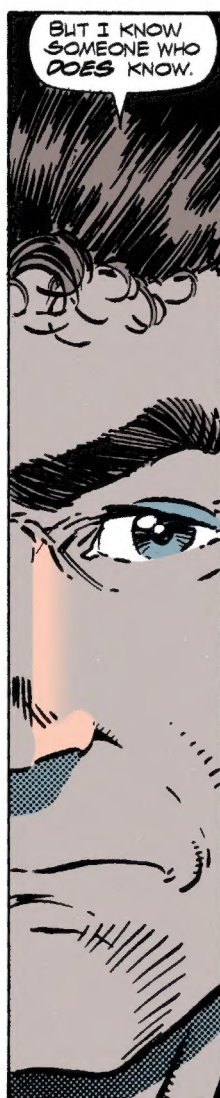
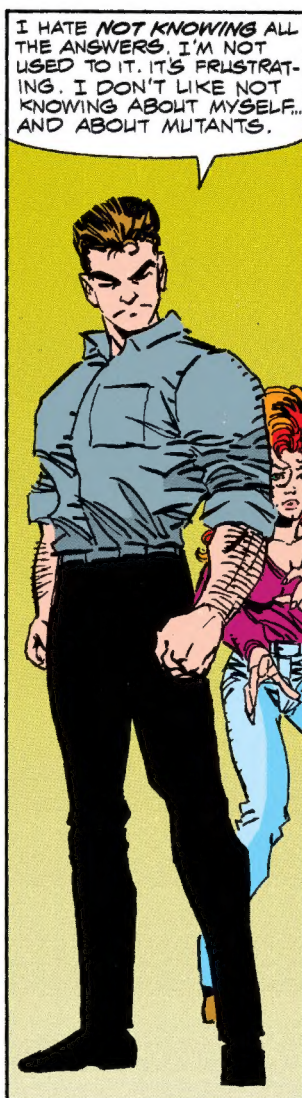
NO MORE
PRESSURE,
OKAY?

WE'VE BOTH
GOT TO BE
READY FOR
THIS.

YEAH.

THE MUTANT FACTOR
SCARES ME. A
REGULAR BABY IS
ONE THING... A
MUTANT MIGHT
KILL ME.

OR ARE YOU
FORGETTING
ABOUT THAT
NASTY BITE
YOU RECEIVED
A WHILE
BACK FROM A
CERTAIN
RADIOACTIVE
SPIDER?



ELSEWHERE ...



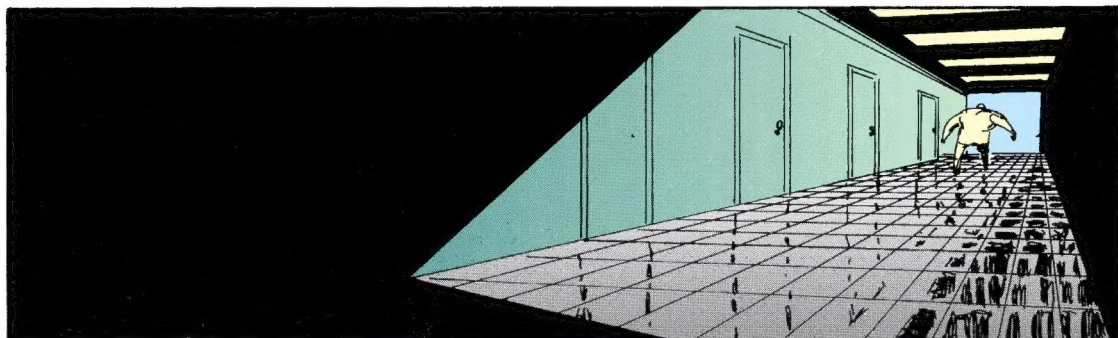
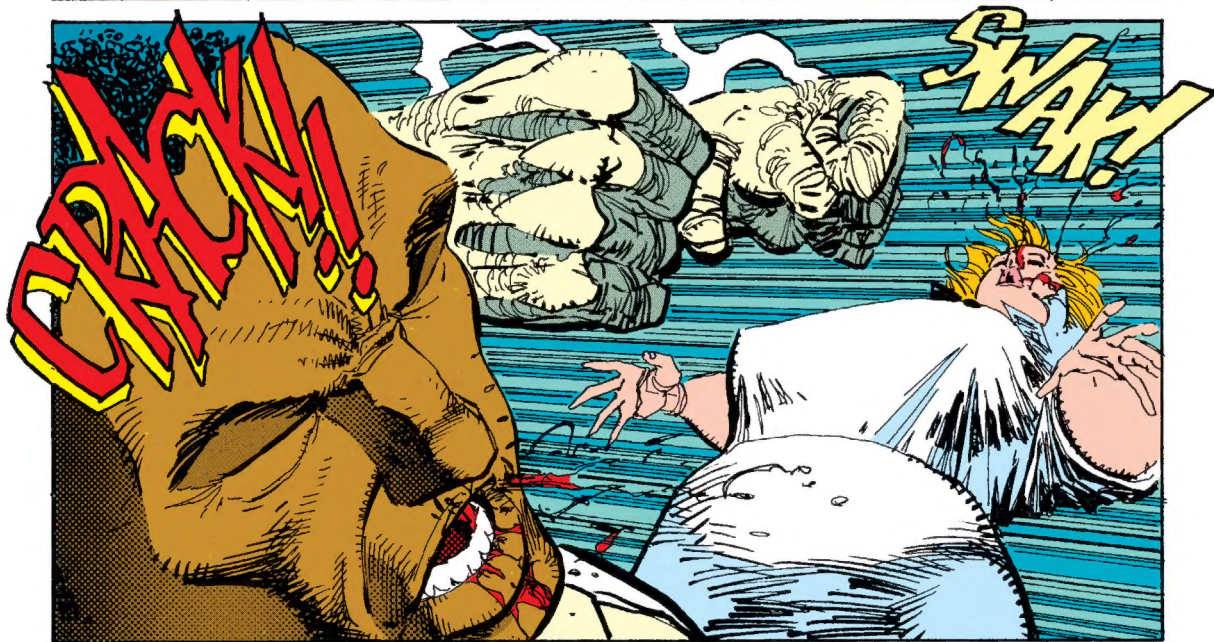
HE'S DOING OKAY NOW, NURSE WHITE. YOU'VE TAKEN QUITE A LIKING TO OUR MYSTERIOUS VISITOR, HAVEN'T YOU?

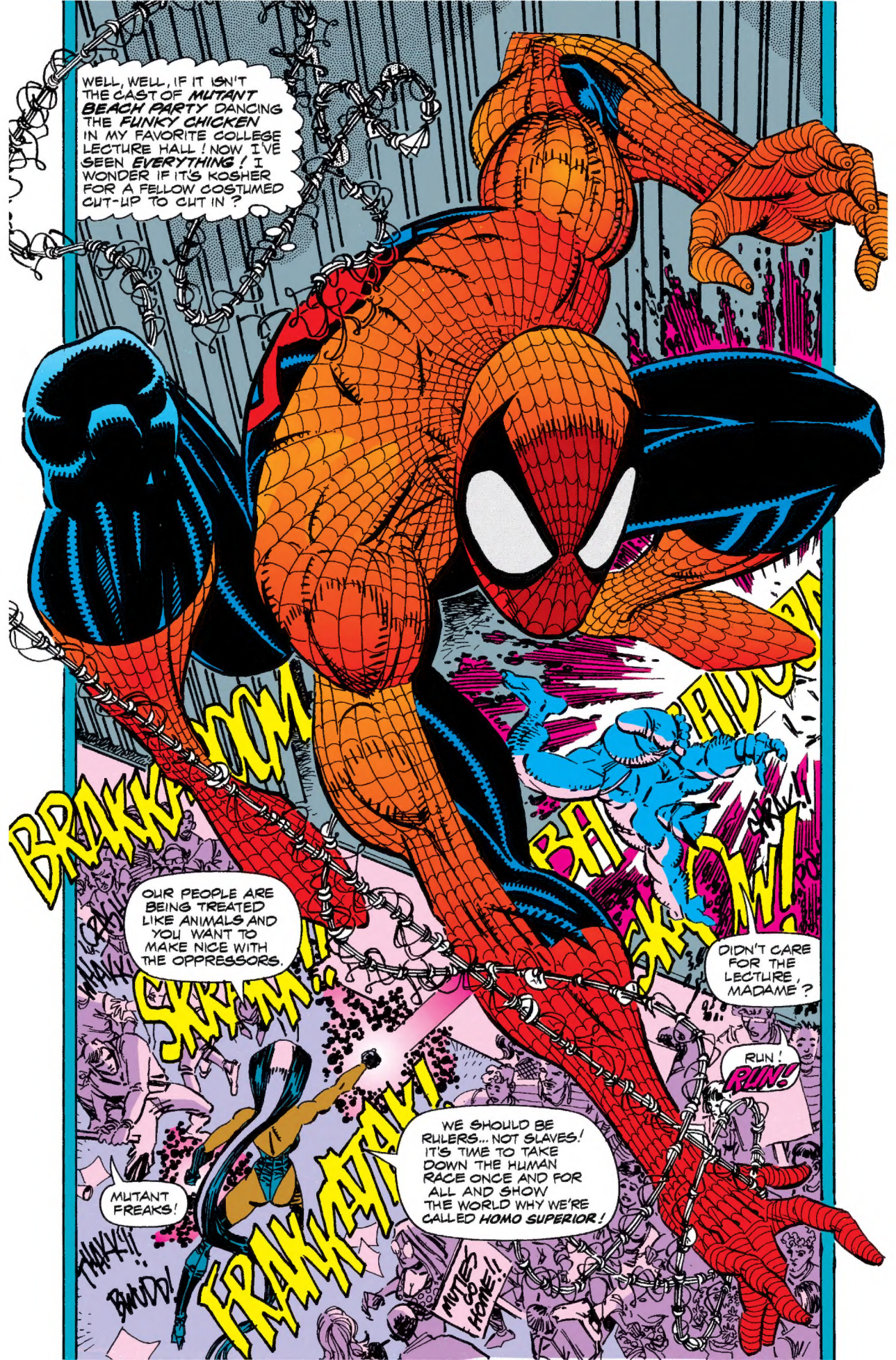


AWW...HE LOOKS SO CUTE JUST SLEEPING THERE... HE'S DEFINITELY GOT HIS CHARM.

OH, MY.

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO HIM ?!!



A full-page comic book illustration of Spider-Man in his classic red and blue suit, suspended in a cage made of barbed wire. He is looking down with a determined expression. In the background, a crowd of mutants is gathered, some holding signs. A blue mutant is seen running in the distance. The scene is filled with action sound effects like 'BRAKK!', 'SKRAM!', 'FRANKATANK!', 'THANKS!!', 'BRAVO!', and 'MUTANTS GO HOME!!'.

WELL, WELL, IF IT ISN'T
THE CAST OF *MUTANT
BEACH PARTY* DANCING
THE *FUNKY CHICKEN*
IN MY FAVORITE COLLEGE
LECTURE HALL! NOW I'VE
SEEN *EVERYTHING*! I
WONDER IF IT'S KOSHER
FOR A FELLOW COSTUMED
CUT-UP TO CUT IN?

OUR PEOPLE ARE
BEING TREATED
LIKE ANIMALS AND
YOU WANT TO
MAKE NICE WITH
THE OPPRESSORS.

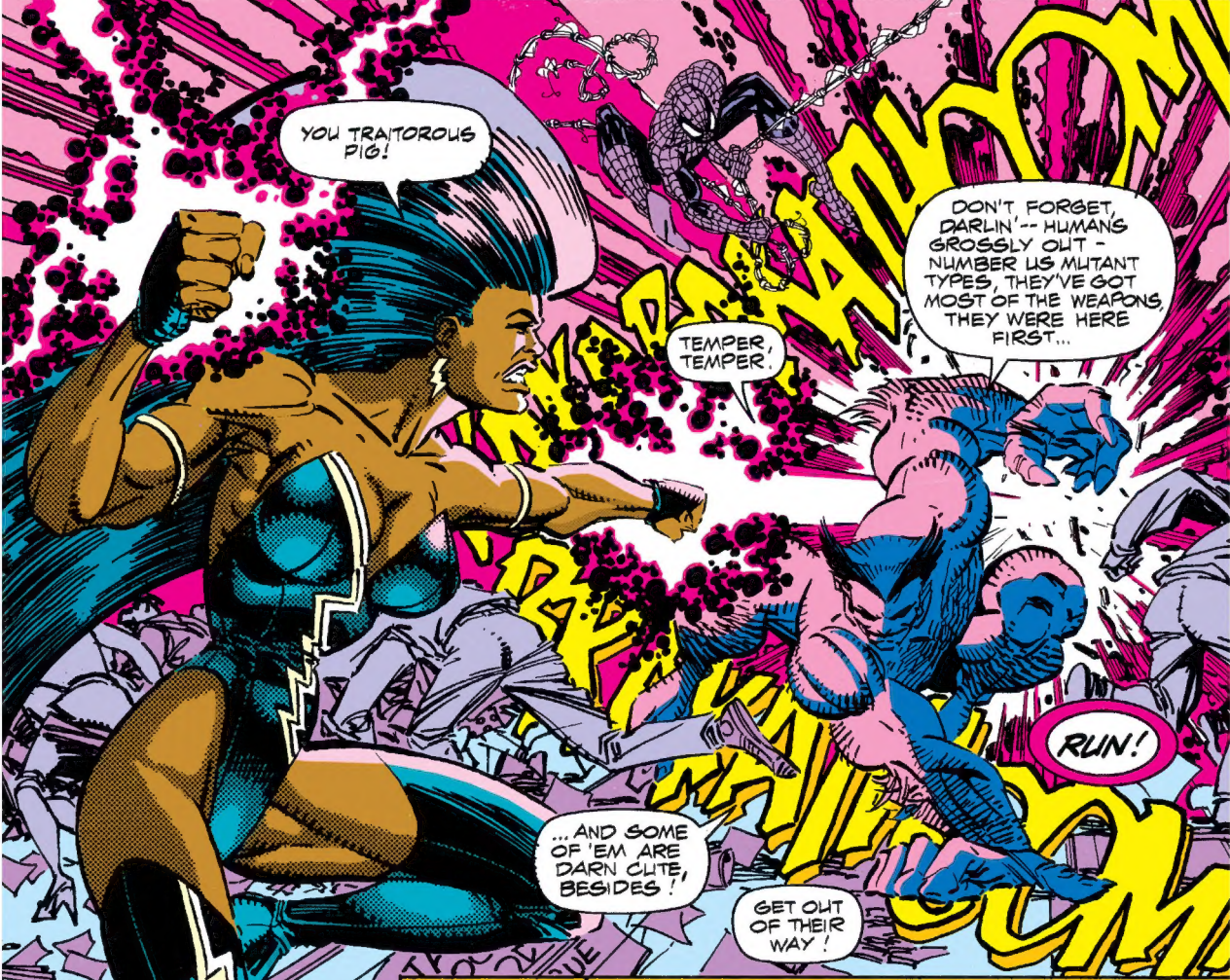
DIDN'T CARE
FOR THE
LECTURE,
MADAME?

RUN!
RUN!

MUTANT
FREAKS!

WE SHOULD BE
RULERS... NOT SLAVES!
IT'S TIME TO TAKE
DOWN THE HUMAN
RACE ONCE AND FOR
ALL AND SHOW
THE WORLD WHY WE'RE
CALLED *HOMO SUPERIOR*!

MUTANTS
GO
HOME!!



YOU TRAITOROUS
PIG!

DON'T FORGET,
DARLIN'-- HUMANS
GROSSLY OUT -
NUMBER US MUTANT
TYPES, THEY'VE GOT
MOST OF THE WEAPONS
THEY WERE HERE
FIRST...

TEMPER,
TEMPER.

RUN!

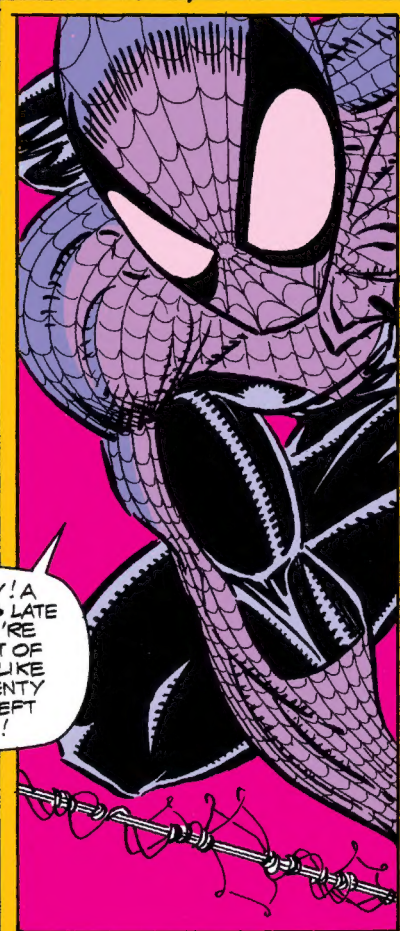
... AND SOME
OF 'EM ARE
DARN CUTE,
BESIDES!

GET OUT
OF THEIR
WAY!

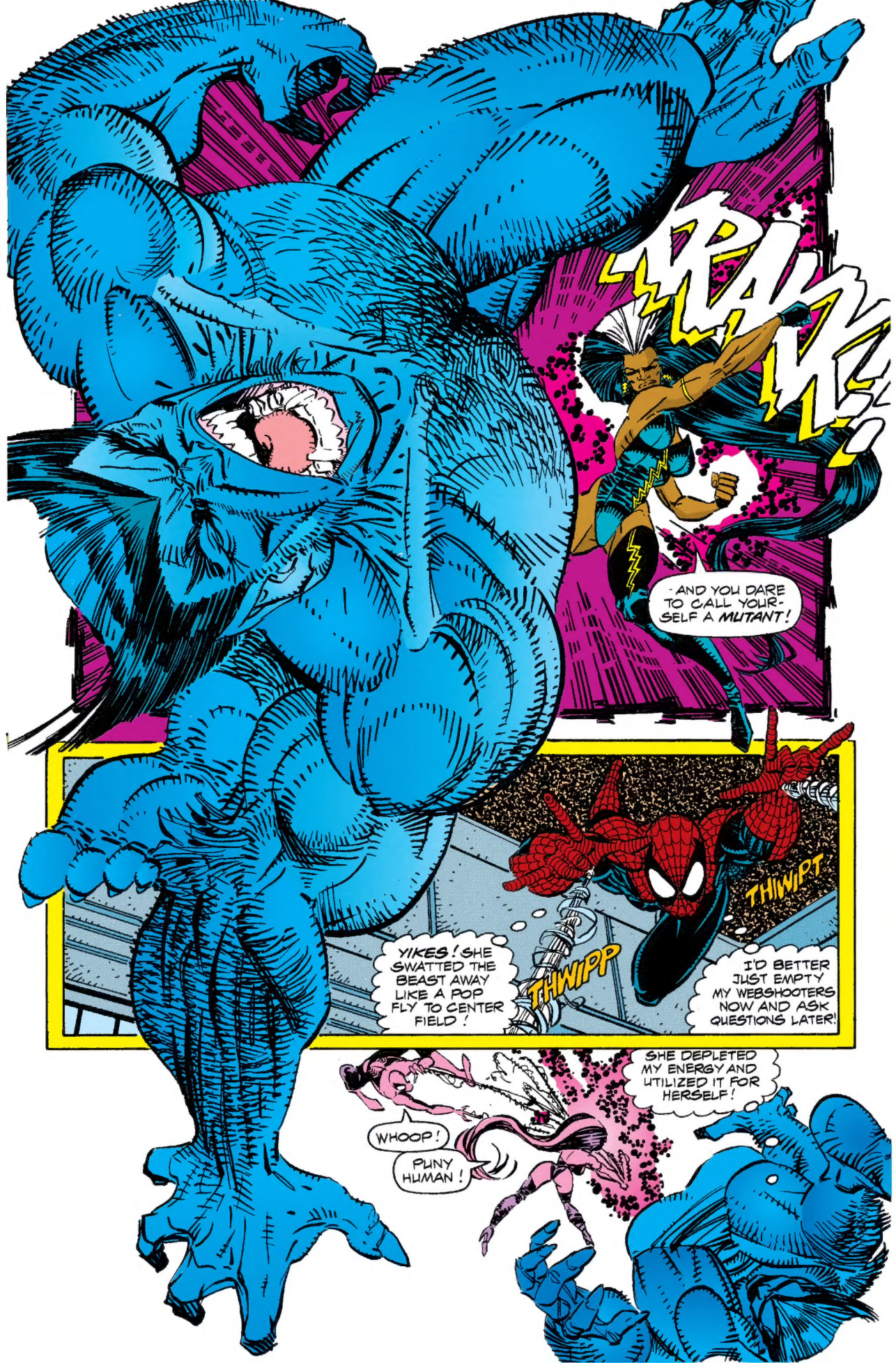


CEASE YOUR
WITLESS
PRATTING,
HUMAN
LOVER!

SOME PARTY! A
FEW MINUTES LATE
AND THEY'RE
ALREADY OUT OF
DIP. LOOKS LIKE
THERE'S PLENTY
OF PUNCH LEFT
THOUGH!



SAY
GOOD NIGHT,
GRACIE ...!



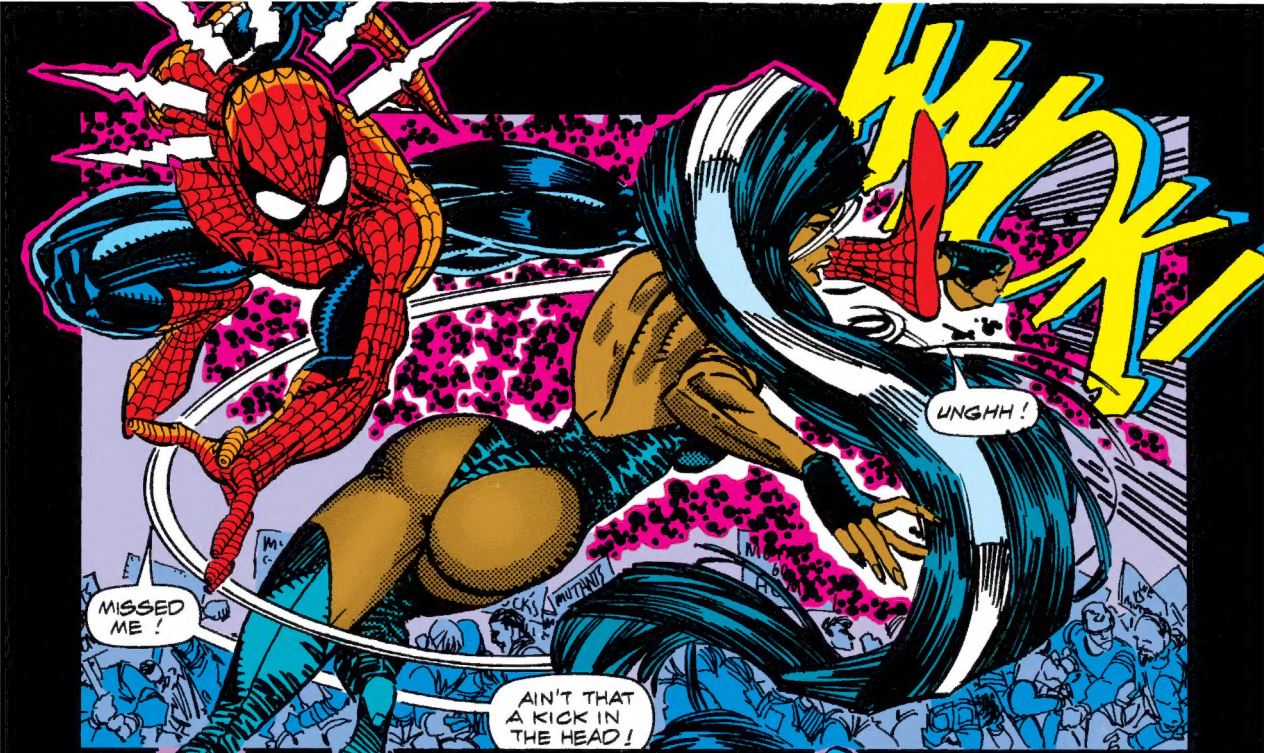
RA!

AND YOU DARE TO CALL YOURSELF A MUTANT!

YIKES! SHE SWATTED THE BEAST AWAY LIKE A POP FLY TO CENTER FIELD!

I'D BETTER JUST EMPTY MY WEBSHOOTERS NOW AND ASK QUESTIONS LATER!

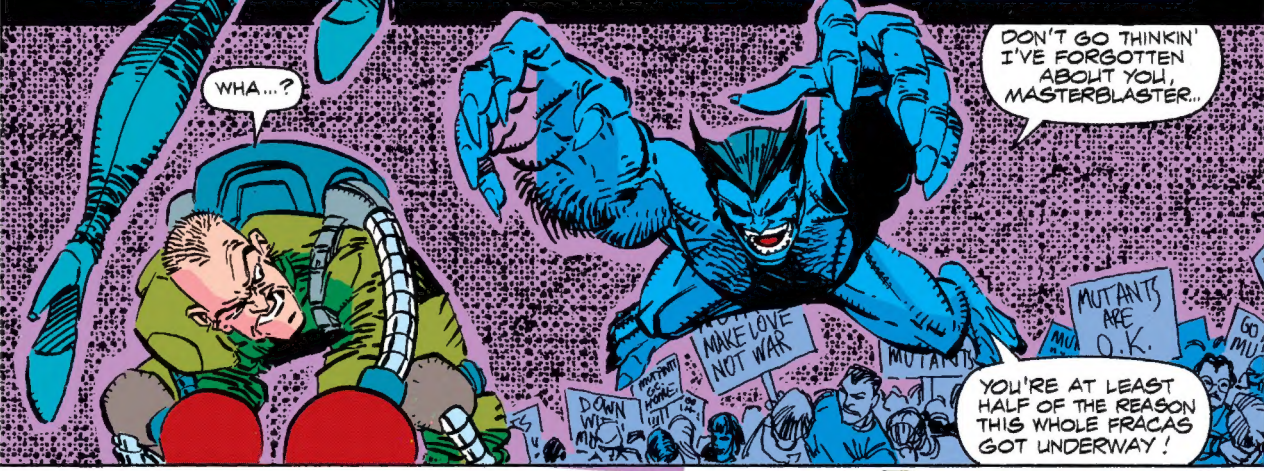
WHOOH!
PUNY HUMAN!



MISSED ME!

UNGHH!

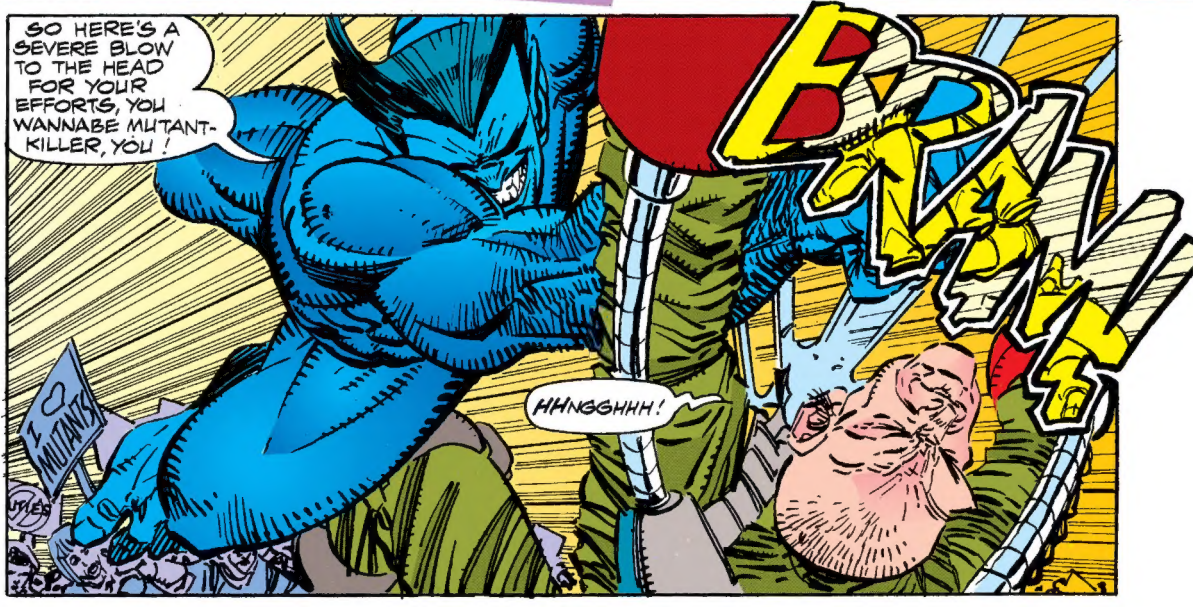
AIN'T THAT A KICK IN THE HEAD!



WHA...?

DON'T GO THINKIN' I'VE FORGOTTEN ABOUT YOU, MASTERBLASTER...

YOU'RE AT LEAST HALF OF THE REASON THIS WHOLE FRACAS GOT UNDERWAY!



SO HERE'S A SEVERE BLOW TO THE HEAD FOR YOUR EFFORTS, YOU WANNABE MUTANT-KILLER, YOU!

HHNGGHHH!

SPAK!!

HER BLOWS
ARE LANDING--
AND HARD!
SHE'S SAPPING
MY STRENGTH!

UNGHHH!

WANGCHH!!

YOU'RE
MINE,
WOMAN!!

NO!!
GET AWAY
FROM ME!!

DOWN
MUTANTS

MUTIES



DOWN,
YOU CURSED
BEAST!

HERE
GOES...

OOOOFTA!

... NOTHING!

UNGH!

SKOOSH!!

WIRRRR
WIRRRR

THANKS FOR
THE OPENING,
BLUE.

AH, THE
EVER
PUNCTUAL
POLICE, HERE TO
BREAK THINGS UP,
NO DOUBT!

MY PLEASURE,
RED. I SEE
MOST OF THE
CROWD SNUCK
OUT RIGHT AT...

IF IT'S OKAY
WITH YOU...

... I'D MUCH
RATHER CONTINUE
THIS LITTLE
CONVERSATION
ELSEWHERE!

...WELL, THAT'S ANOTHER DAY IN THE LIFE OF A MUTANT, WEBHEAD.

I KEEP A PRETTY FULL CALENDAR MYSELF, FELLA.

THE HUMAN, MASTERBLASTER, WANTS ALL HIS MUTANTS DEAD SO THAT WE CAN'T TAKE OVER THE WORLD AND THE MUTANT, POWERHOUSE, WANTS TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD. NEITHER ONE HAS A PARTICULARLY HEALTHY PRESCRIPTION FOR THIS PLANET.

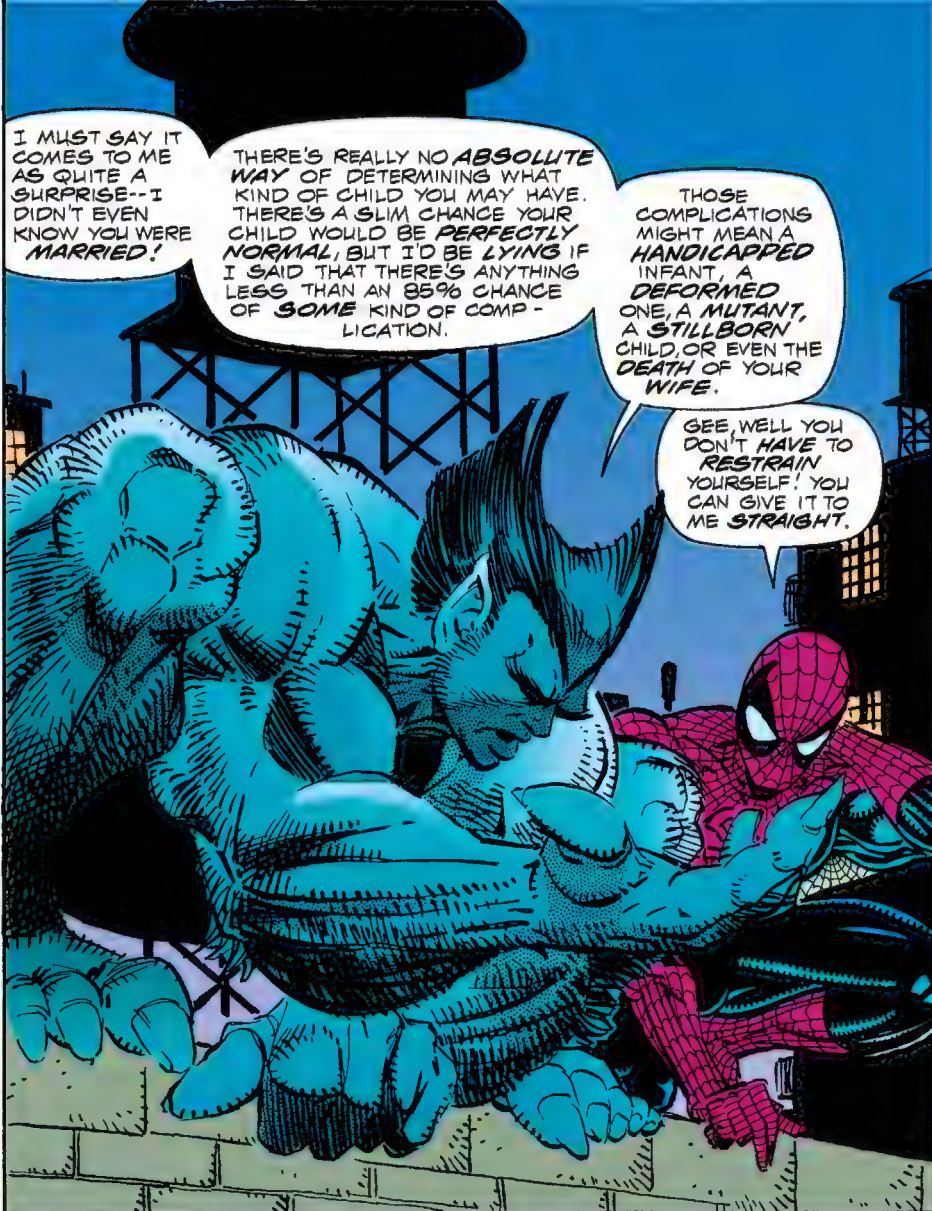
BUT ENOUGH OF THAT-- YOU'VE COME TO ME WITH A PROBLEM.

I MUST SAY IT COMES TO ME AS QUITE A SURPRISE--I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW YOU WERE MARRIED!

THERE'S REALLY NO ABSOLUTE WAY OF DETERMINING WHAT KIND OF CHILD YOU MAY HAVE. THERE'S A SLIM CHANCE YOUR CHILD WOULD BE PERFECTLY NORMAL, BUT I'D BE LYING IF I SAID THAT THERE'S ANYTHING LESS THAN AN 85% CHANCE OF SOME KIND OF COMPLICATION.

THOSE COMPLICATIONS MIGHT MEAN A HANDICAPPED INFANT, A DEFORMED ONE, A MUTANT, A STILLBORN CHILD, OR EVEN THE DEATH OF YOUR WIFE.

GEE, WELL YOU DON'T HAVE TO RESTRAIN YOURSELF! YOU CAN GIVE IT TO ME STRAIGHT.

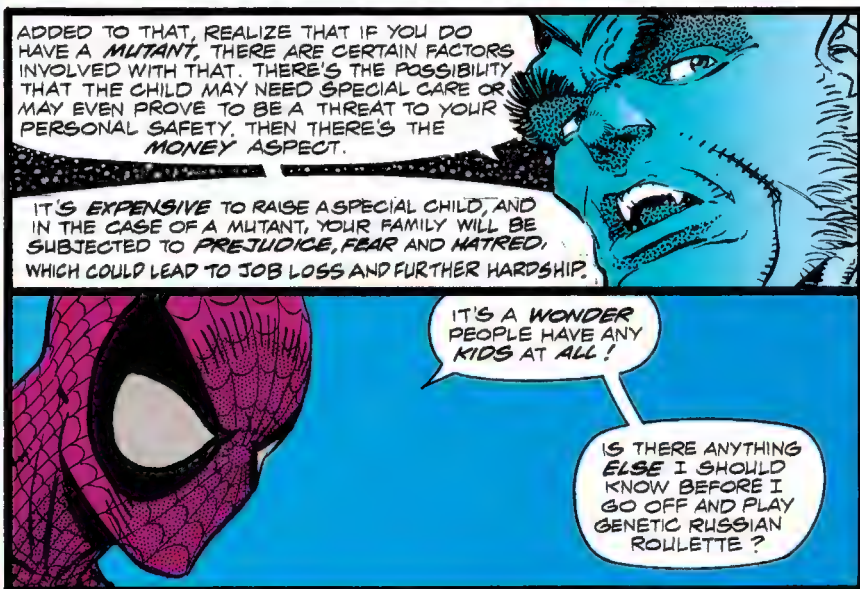


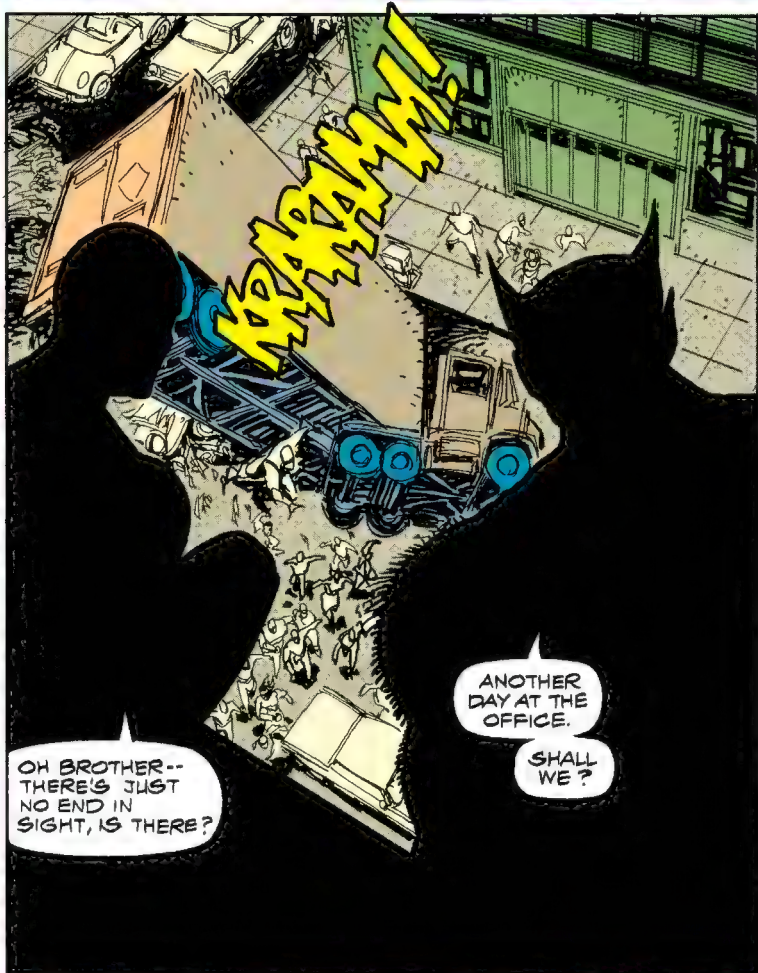
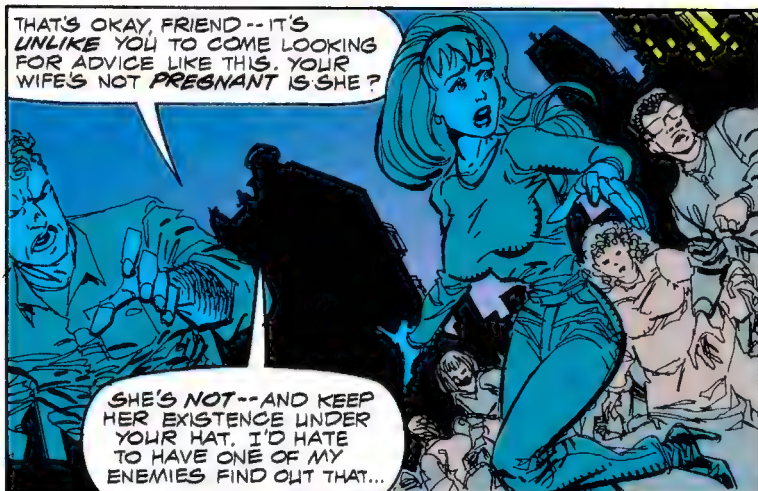
ADDED TO THAT, REALIZE THAT IF YOU DO HAVE A MUTANT, THERE ARE CERTAIN FACTORS INVOLVED WITH THAT. THERE'S THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE CHILD MAY NEED SPECIAL CARE OR MAY EVEN PROVE TO BE A THREAT TO YOUR PERSONAL SAFETY. THEN THERE'S THE MONEY ASPECT.

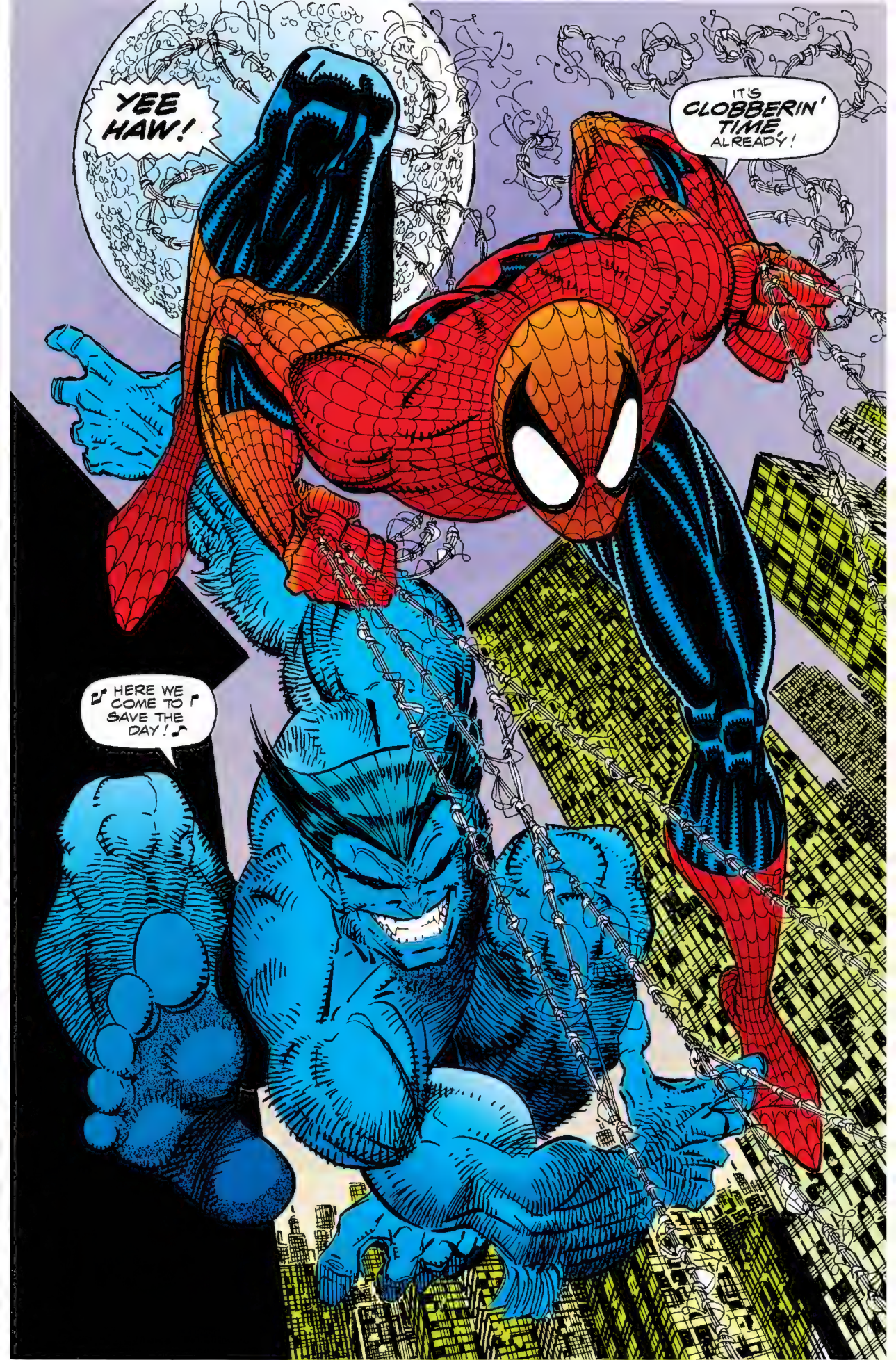
IT'S EXPENSIVE TO RAISE A SPECIAL CHILD, AND IN THE CASE OF A MUTANT, YOUR FAMILY WILL BE SUBJECTED TO PREJUDICE, FEAR AND HATRED, WHICH COULD LEAD TO JOB LOSS AND FURTHER HARDSHIP.

IT'S A WONDER PEOPLE HAVE ANY KIDS AT ALL!

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I SHOULD KNOW BEFORE I GO OFF AND PLAY GENETIC RUSSIAN ROULETTE?





A full-page comic book illustration featuring Spider-Man and Wolverine. Spider-Man, in his iconic red and blue suit, is positioned in the upper right, looking down at Wolverine. Wolverine, in his blue and silver X-Men uniform, is in the lower left, looking up at Spider-Man with a determined, toothy grin. They are surrounded by a dense web of silver, metallic-looking webs that crisscross the entire scene. The background shows a cityscape with yellow and green buildings under a purple sky. A large, circular, metallic-looking object is visible in the upper left corner.

**YEE
HAW!**

IT'S
**CLOBBERIN'
TIME,**
ALREADY!

♪ **HERE WE
COME TO
SAVE THE
DAY!** ♪



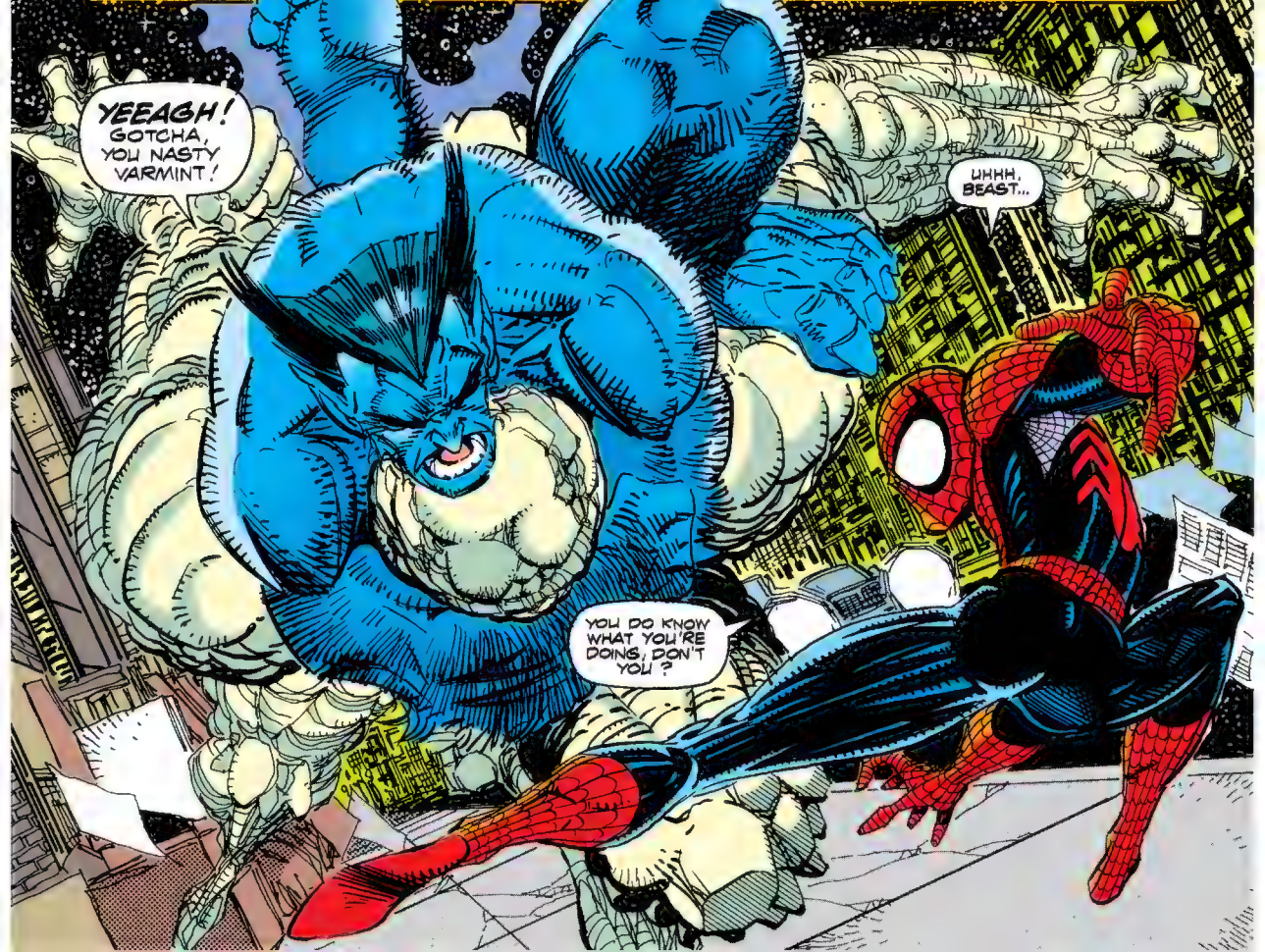
SAY THERE, BIG FELLOW--COULD YOU DIRECT ME TO HOBOKEN?

IS THAT A NEW SCENT YOU HAVE ON? IT SMELLS DIVINE!



YIPE!

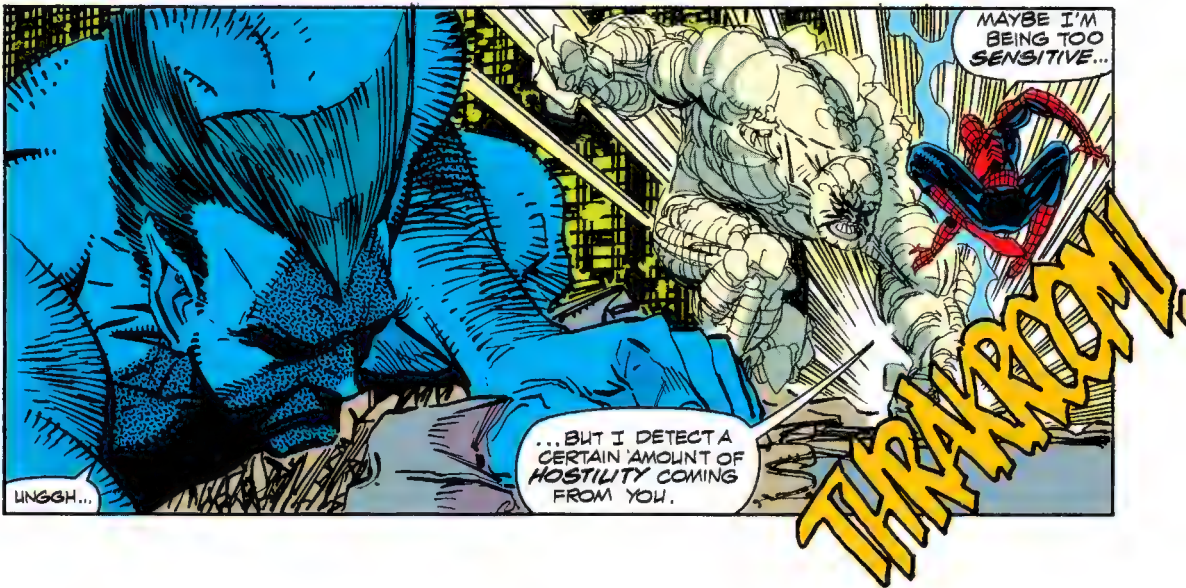
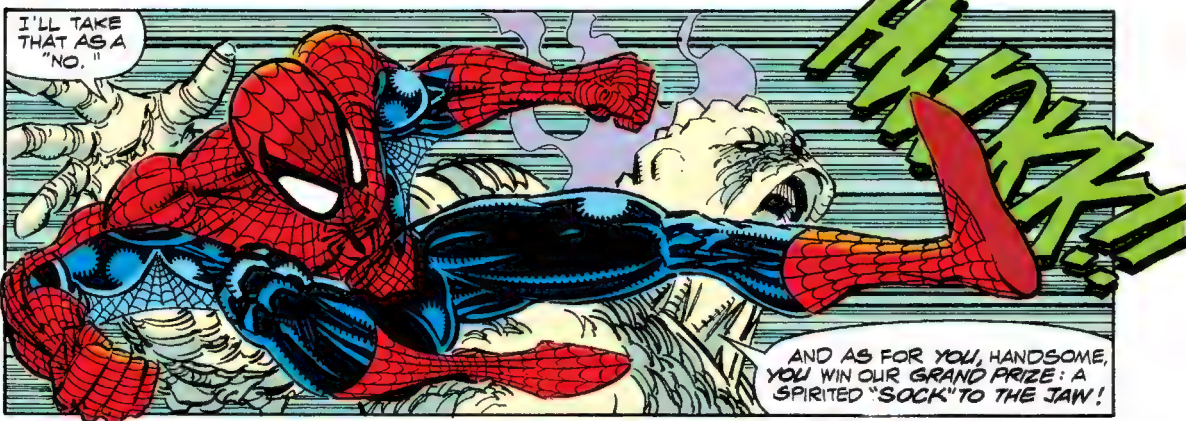
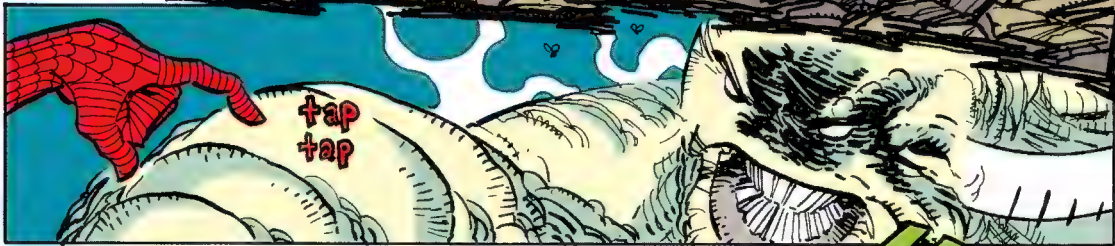
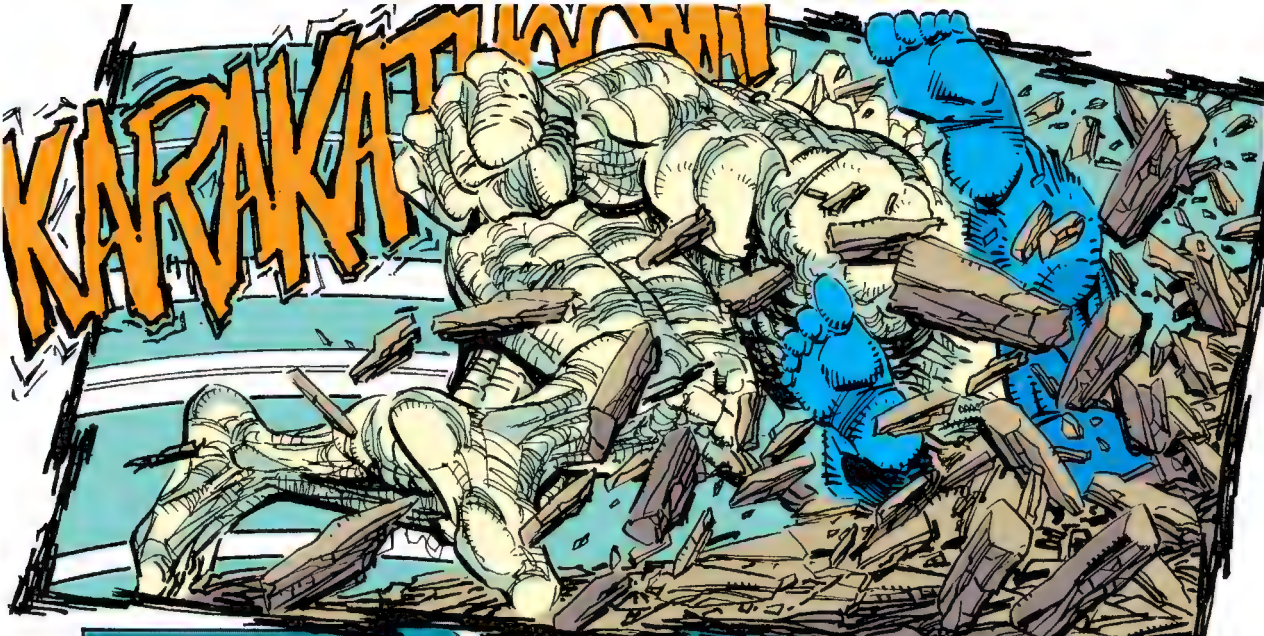
YOU SEEM A BIT EDDY. MIGHT I RECOMMEND A DECAFFEINATED COFFEE?




YEEAGH! GOTCHA, YOU NASTY VARMINT!

UHHH... BEAST...

YOU DO KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING, DON'T YOU?






IS IT SOMETHING
YOU WANT TO
TALK ABOUT,
OR...

OKAY,
OKAY, WE
DON'T HAVE
TO.



IT WAS JUST A
SUGGESTION.

KAKA PUMPH!



THERE THEY
GO. I SUPPOSE
I SHOULD
FOLLOW THEM...



:(SIGH):

I HATE
SEWERS!

HEY, BEAST,
NICE OF YOU
TO SHOW UP!

0**9&0!

I'M JUST
WRAPPING THINGS
UP HERE. YOU
COULD PUT YOUR
FINGER ON THIS
KNOT FOR ME IF
YOU WANT TO FEEL
USEFUL!

thwipp!
thwipp!
thwipp!

oops.

GANGWAY,
SPIDEY!

SNAP!

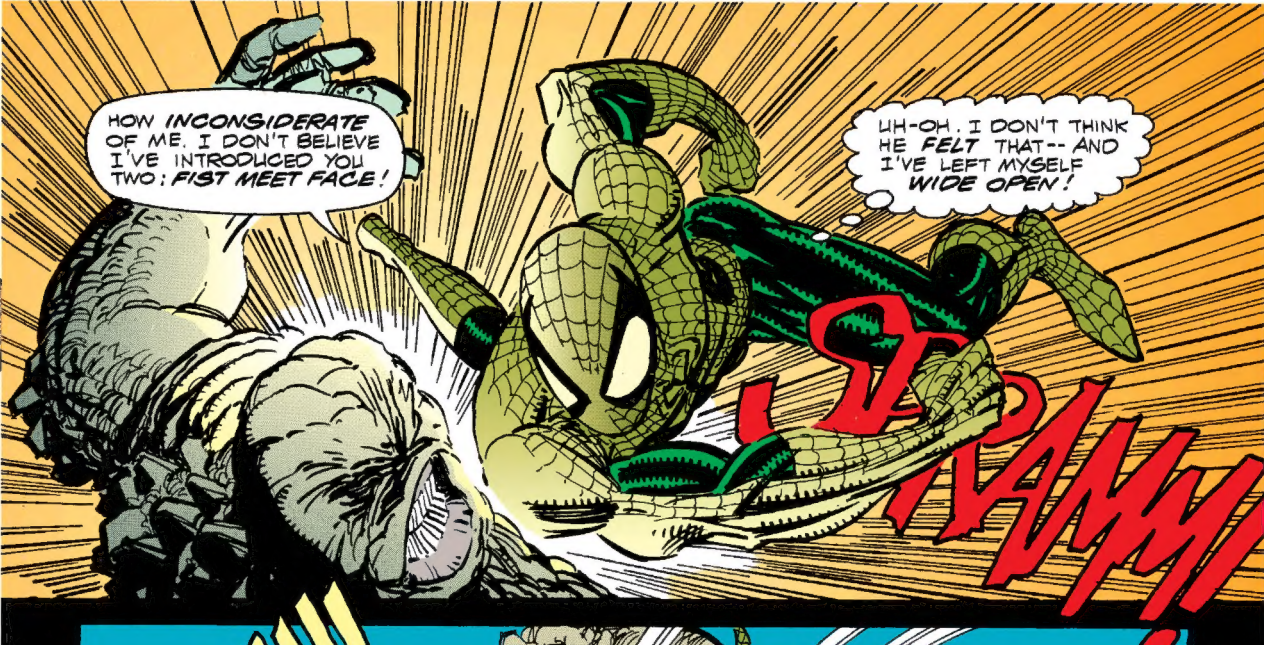
UHHNGH!

OH, MAN, THE
BEAST'S DOWN
AND OUT FOR
A SECOND
TIME.

THIS GUY'S NOT
GOING TO BE AN
EASY KNOCK OUT.

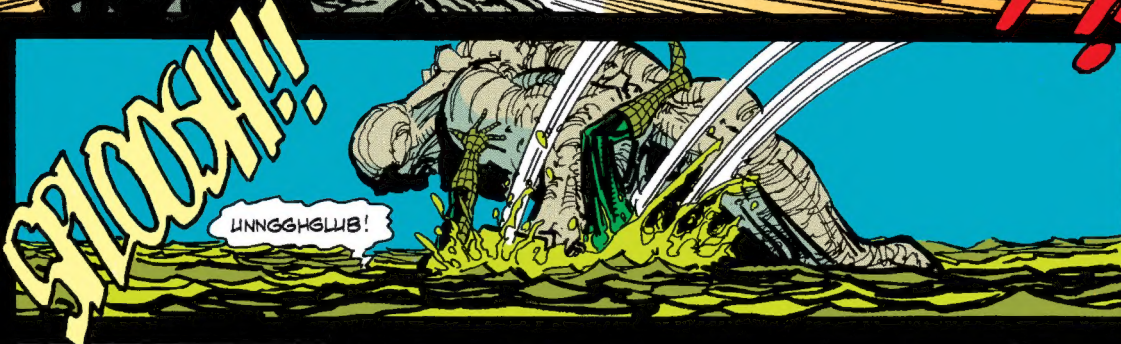
HECK, HE'S
ALREADY
NOT AN EASY
KNOCK OUT!

WHRAWWW!



HOW INCONSIDERATE OF ME. I DON'T BELIEVE I'VE INTRODUCED YOU TWO: FIST MEET FACE!

UH-OH. I DON'T THINK HE FELT THAT-- AND I'VE LEFT MYSELF WIDE OPEN!



UNNGGHLUB!

I CAN'T GET ANY LEVERAGE AND THE ONLY GUY THAT COULD HELP ME IS SUCKING ANTS OUT OF HIS PILLOW. THIS GUY'S FINGERS HAVE ME PINNED--! LIKE A VISE AROUND MY NECK!

I CLIMB INTO THESE TIGHTS ALMOST EVERY DAY AND FACE IMPROBABLE ODDS. IT DOESN'T OCCUR TO ME AS OFTEN AS IT SHOULD THAT ONE DAY I MIGHT NOT MAKE IT HOME.

I NEVER THOUGHT IT WOULD END LIKE THIS. POOR MARY JANE WILL FIND OUT ABOUT MY DEATH AND BE HOUNDED BY THE PRESS. MY PASSING WILL DEVASTATE HER.

THIS IS THE LIFE I'VE CHOSEN FOR MYSELF?

FOR MY WIFE?

"FOR ANY KIDS WE'D EVER HAVE?"

"MY PARENTS DIED-- RISKING THEIR LIVES-- WHEN I WAS TOO YOUNG TO REMEMBER.

"I GREW UP AS A LONELY BOY. FOREVER DENIED THEIR LOVE. DIFFERENT FROM OTHER LITTLE BOYS.



THIS MAY BE THE END--!

MARY JANE ALWAYS TELLS ME TO BE CAREFUL... MARY JANE...



"ALONE."



JOEY...
IS THAT
YOU?

GHAAAAH!

HHUNNGH. HHUNNGH.
OH, MAN... IF I'M
DEAD RIGHT NOW I
WASN'T NEAR AS
GOOD AS SHOULD
HAVE BEEN.

OH, JOEY--YOU'RE
OKAY. I WAS SO
WORRIED.

YOUR MAMMA TOLD ME THAT SHE
TOOK YOU UP TOP TO THE HOSPITAL
'CAUSE WE DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO
MAKE YOU BETTER. I WAS SO
WORRIED THAT WE'D NEVER SEE
YOU AGAIN.

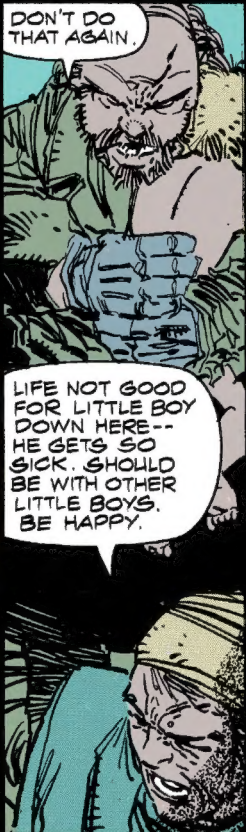
THAT'S THE
MONSTER
WE'VE BEEN
FIGHTING
ALL THIS
TIME?! HE'S
SOME KIND
OF LITTLE
MUTANT
KID.

DON'T DO
THAT AGAIN.

LIFE NOT GOOD
FOR LITTLE BOY
DOWN HERE--
HE GETS SO
SICK. SHOULD
BE WITH OTHER
LITTLE BOYS.
BE HAPPY.

THIS IS
INSANE.

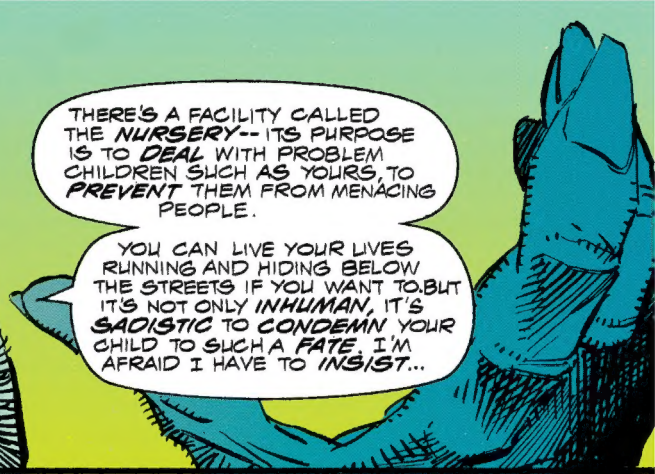
WAIT A MINUTE!
HOLD IT--! YOU
DON'T UNDERSTAND,
YOUR CHILD NEEDS
HELP! HE'S TOO
POWERFUL TO BE
LEFT ALONE
WITHOUT GUIDANCE!





THERE'S A FACILITY CALLED THE **NURSERY**-- ITS PURPOSE IS TO **DEAL** WITH PROBLEM CHILDREN SUCH AS YOURS, TO **PREVENT** THEM FROM MENACING PEOPLE.

YOU CAN LIVE YOUR LIVES RUNNING AND HIDING BELOW THE STREETS IF YOU WANT TO. BUT IT'S NOT ONLY **INHUMAN**, IT'S **SADISTIC** TO **CONDEMN** YOUR CHILD TO SUCH A FATE, I'M AFRAID I HAVE TO **INSIST**...



WE DON'T WANT TO **FIGHT**. HIS MAMMA WANTED A BETTER LIFE FOR HIM. WANTED TO GIVE HIM AWAY. I WANT HIM TO BE **SAFE**, TOO, BUT I DON'T WANT TO **LOSE** HIM.

PROMISE ME I CAN SEE HIM WHEN I WANT TO-- THAT HE'LL BE **SAFE**-- AND I'LL DO WHAT YOU SAY.



YOU HAVE MY WORD.

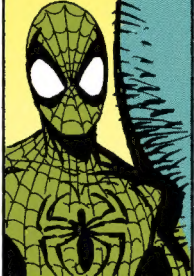
I'LL JOIN YOU IN A MOMENT TO HELP MAKE ARRANGEMENTS.

COUGH
COUGH

OH, YES. THAT'S THE UPSIDE OF BEING A PARENT THAT I FORGOT TO MENTION, **SPIDEY**.

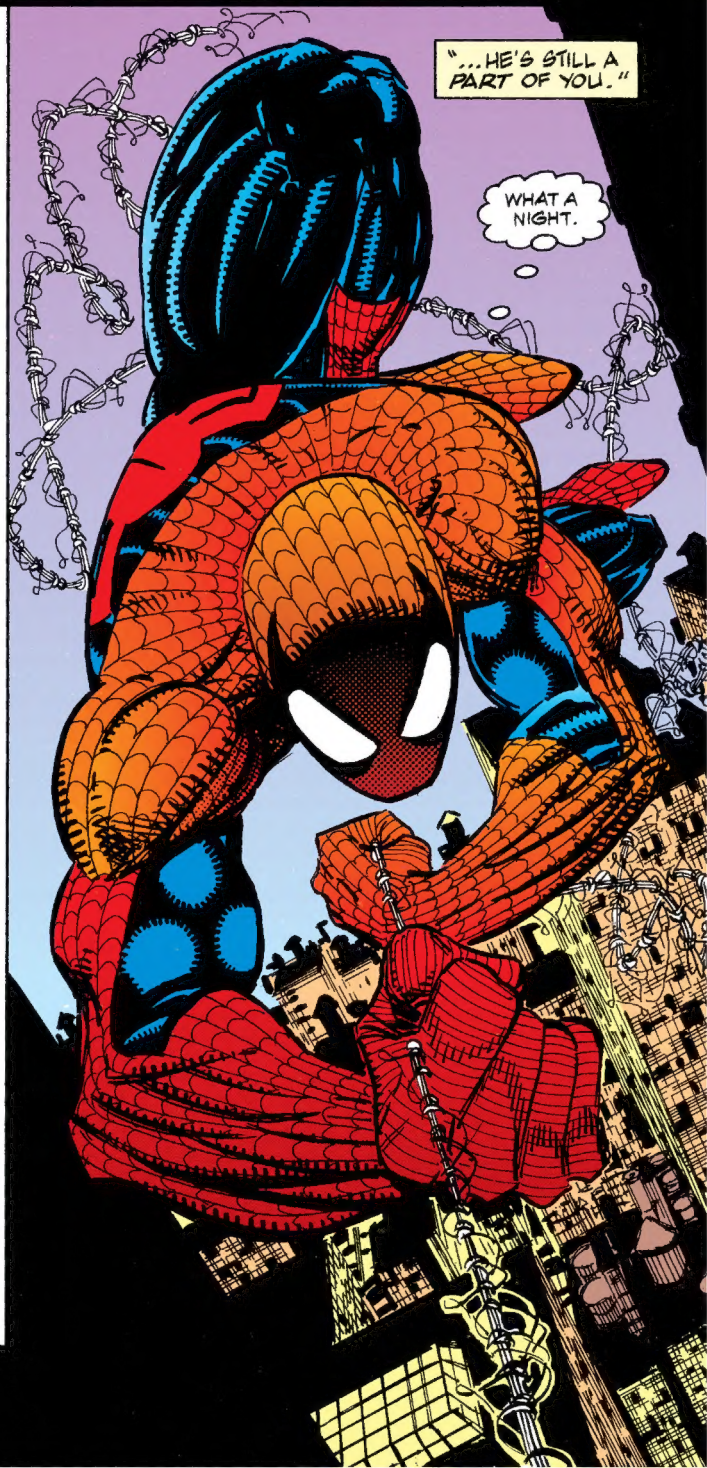


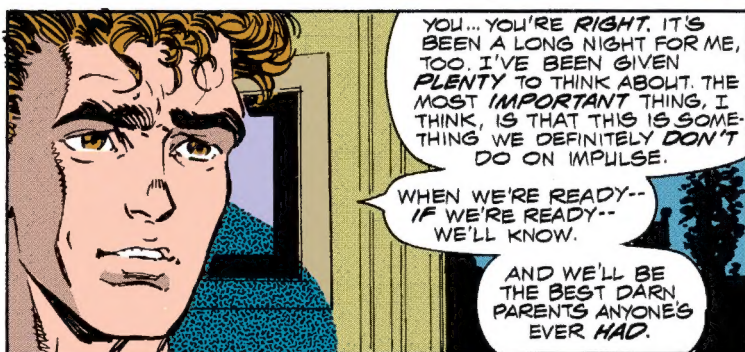
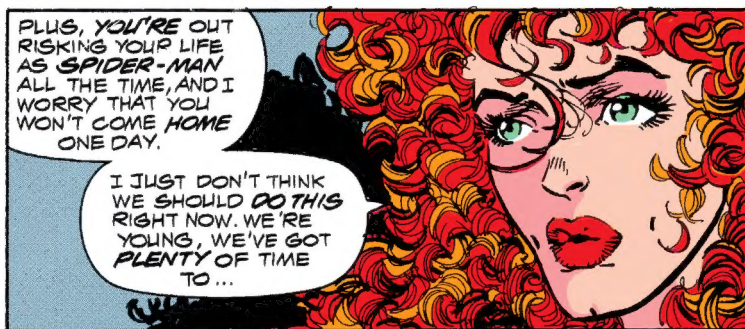
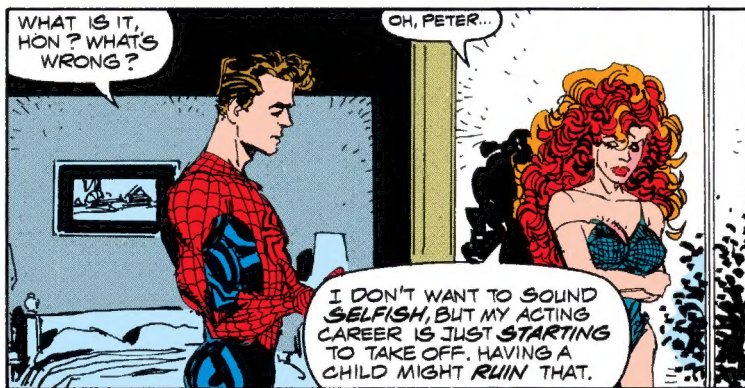
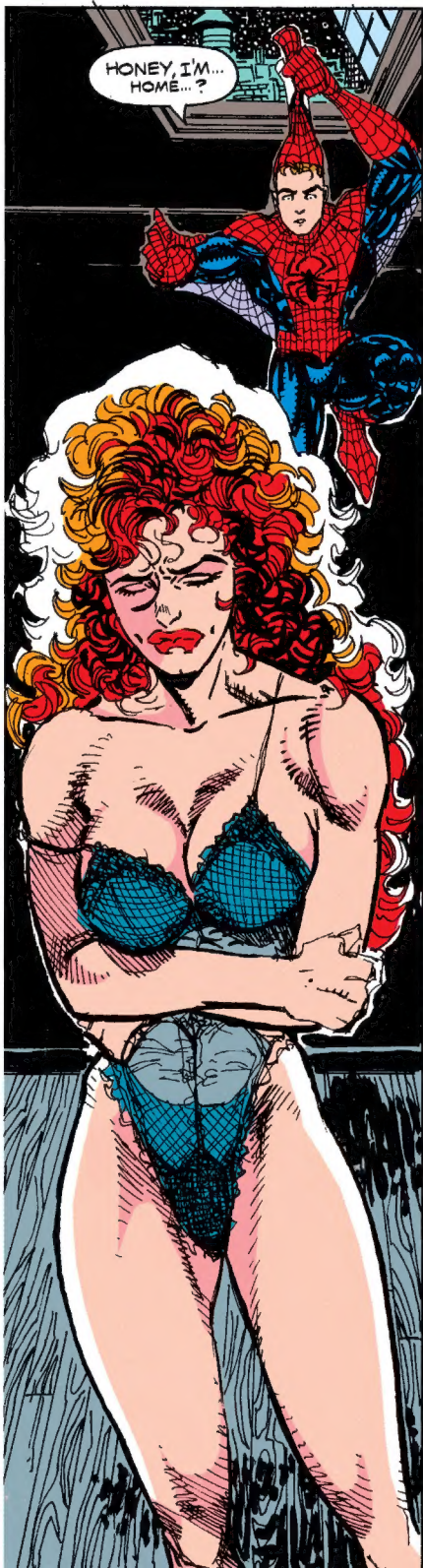
YOU'LL LOVE YOUR CHILD NO MATTER WHAT. MUTANT OR NO..



"...HE'S STILL A PART OF YOU."

WHAT A NIGHT.





NEXT: TODD RETURNS--AND EXITS--WITH THE BIG X-FORCE CROSSOVER!